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The correct name of the Terek Sandpiper

by Burt L. Monroe, Jr.

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The recent trend of merging most forms of tringine sandpipers into the single genus *Tringa* has produced a case of *apparent* secondary homonymy in the Terek Sandpiper. Often recognized in a monotypic genus as *Xenus cinereus*, this species is now frequently placed in *Tringa*, producing the name *Tringa cinerea* in apparent conflict with the older *Tringa cinerea* Brünnich 1764, a synonym of *Calidris canutus* (Red Knot). The original description of the Terek Sandpiper was based on *Scolopax cinerea* Güldenstädt 1775; the next available name is *Scolopax terek* Latham 1790.

It should be pointed out that this is *not* a case of secondary homonymy, inasmuch as both species' descriptions as '*cinerea*' were allocated to different genera (*Scolopax* and *Tringa*, respectively, for the Terek Sandpiper and Red Knot) and are currently placed in different genera (*Tringa* and *Calidris*, respectively); at no time have both species been concurrently placed in the same genus, thus no secondary homonymy exists. This case is precisely the same as the one in America of the Blackpoll Warbler: originally described as *Muscicapa striata* Forster 1772, the Blackpoll Warbler is now recognized as *Dendroica striata*, the name unaffected by the presently recognized *Muscicapa striata* (Spotted Flycatcher) based on *Motacilla striata* Pallas 1764 (see Lowery & Monroe *in* Peters (1968) *Check-list of Birds of the World*, 14: 32, footnote). In both cases, there was no instance of concurrent homonymy, thus no

secondary homonymy exists and the original names must stand. The Terek Sandpiper is properly known as *Tringa cinerea* or *Xenus cinereus*, depending on one's generic viewpoint.

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Chestnut-cheeked Starling *Sturnus philippensis*: a first record for mainland South-East Asia

by D. Parish & C. Prentice

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Whilst examining a flock of over 400 Purple-backed Starlings *Sturnus sturninus* feeding in a tree in the garden of the Asian Wetland Bureau office in Section 12, Petaling Jaya, Selangor State, Peninsular Malaysia (3°06′N, 101°39′E) on 21 January 1988, we independently noticed an individual with rufous-chestnut cheek patches sitting with them on a branch c. 6 m above ground level.

After c. 15 minutes, the flock took flight, flying c. 200 m to other trees nearby. A number returned, but the unusual bird was not seen again. Purple-backed Starlings were observed in the area regularly over the next 2 weeks, but never in such large numbers and the bird with chestnut cheeks was not seen again.

Whilst under observation for c. 10 minutes, a detailed plumage description was made, and the bird was compared with illustrations and descriptions in King *et al.* (1975). The bird in general matched the description for the adult male Purple-backed Starling, but clearly showed chestnut cheeks, ear coverts and sides of the neck and had dusky grey flanks and no pale tips to the greater coverts. It was not possible to determine conclusively whether or not there was a purple nape patch owing to the angle of view. No discernible call was heard.

These observations enabled us to identify the bird as an adult male *Sturnus philippensis*—English names: Red-cheeked Myna (Wild Bird Society of Japan 1982), Violet-backed Starling (Smythies 1981) or Chestnut-cheeked Starling (White & Bruce 1986, Meyer de Schauensee 1984). This species is similar to but slightly larger than the Purple-backed Starling, and the chestnut cheeks, sides of neck and upper breast, together with a single white wing bar (median coverts white), dusky flanks and no purple nape-patch are diagnostic.

During the breeding season, *S. philippensis* occurs in northern Japan and southern Sakhalin (Wild Bird Society of Japan 1982, White & Bruce 1986, Meyer de Schauensee 1984). In the non-breeding season it occurs in the Ryu Kyu Islands and the Philippines, and is an irregular winter visitor to northern Borneo, not recorded south of the Kuching area in Sarawak (Smythies 1981). It has also been recorded in northern Sulawesi,